

REMARKS

The applicants have received and reviewed the Office Action mailed October 19, 2004. The applicants originally submitted claims 1-29 in this application. By a previous Response and Amendment, the applicants amended claims 1 and 23-26, and canceled claim 4. By the present Response and Amendment, the applicants have amended claims 1, 5 and 23, and canceled claim 8. Thus, claims 1-3, 5-7 and 9-29 remain pending in this application. The applicants have not introduced any new matter.

The Examiner rejected claims 1 to 3, 5 to 16 and 18-29 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Okanoue et al. (US Patent No. 5,883,890). However, the Examiner also indicated that claim 17 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 23 to include the subject matter of claim 8 and subject matter similar to that of claim 17. More specifically, the applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 23 to include the ability to resolve comparison results into a single digital value, and to compare the single digital value with a different single digital value to produce a complex comparison result. Support for the amendments is found in the applicants' specification, e.g., from page 10, line 26 to page 11, line 3. Nothing in Okanoue et al. or any of the other cited art discloses or suggests an apparatus or method for interrogating bits of a data frame, in which complex comparison results are produced. Thus, the applicants respectfully submit that the applicants' invention as recited in independent claims 1 and 23 is neither taught nor suggested by Okanoue et al. or any other cited art.

Claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9-16 and 18-22, all of which depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1, incorporate all of the features of amended claim 1 and thus are believed to be allowable at least for that reason. Moreover, claims 2, 3, 5-7, 9-16 and 18-22 recite other features that, when combined with the subject matter of amended claim 1,

are not shown in the art of record. Similarly, claims 24-29, which depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 23, incorporate all of the features of amended claim 23 and thus are believed to be allowable at least for that reason. Moreover, claims 24-29 recite other features that, when combined with the subject matter of amended claim 23, are not shown in the art of record.

In view of the amendments discussed hereinabove, the applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claims 1 to 3, 5 to 16 and 18 to 29 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Finally, the applicants have amended claim 5 to correct its dependency from claim 4, which previously was canceled, to claim 1, which previously was amended to include the subject matter of original claim 4.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments submitted herein and the above comments, the applicants respectfully submit that all grounds of rejection are overcome and that the application has now been placed in full condition for allowance. Accordingly, the applicants earnestly solicit early and favorable action. Should there be any further questions or reservations, the Examiner is urged to telephone the applicants' undersigned attorney at (770) 984-2300.

Respectfully submitted,



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